Unit 13: Work Experience in Travel and Tourism

Delivery guidance

Approaching the unit

In this unit, learners will study the benefits of work experience and the importance of proper planning. They will learn about different types of work-related learning and their benefits. They will reflect on their practical workplace skills by completing at least 40 hours of work experience in an appropriate tourism and travel setting, where they will develop key competencies needed for progression to further study or employability such as self-management, teamwork, problem-solving and communication skills. Learners will develop essential transferable skills that employers look for, by developing their research, problem-solving and communication skills. Learners will reflect on their experience, making recommendations for personal and professional development.

In planning the delivery of this unit, you are likely to use a broad range of different teaching and learning methods such as discussions, whole-class activities, research and presentations. Learners will need to explore different opportunities for work experience and consider the possible placements and job roles within organisations in the travel and tourism industry in their local area. They need to understand how to prepare appropriately before going out into the workplace. The use of logbooks and diaries or journals will be essential in recording the work experience and the tasks carried out. Learners may prefer to record their activities in different ways, and it will be useful to spend some class time exploring different options, for example, online blogs, video diaries and traditional written logbooks. You can involve local employers in the delivery of this unit by inviting them as guest speakers or mentors.

You will need to visit your learners while on placement in order to observe their developing skills in the workplace and to complete a record of practical activity. You may wish to meet with placement supervisors to discuss the learners' progress, the duties they have undertaken, the initiative and confidence they have shown, and their understanding of the limitations of their own role and responsibility. Learners can undertake their placements in a variety of formats – for example, full-time attendance in a block or one-day per week over a number of weeks.

Remember that, while group work is a useful and acceptable form of delivery and formative assessment, you must ensure that each learner independently produces their own evidence containing sufficient depth and detail for summative assessment.

Delivering the learning aims

Learning aim A

For learning aim A, learners need to explore the range of different work-related learning opportunities available within the travel and tourism sector. These could include voluntary, full-time, part-time and seasonal options. You should cover the whole breadth of the travel and tourism sector when covering learning aim A1, including both public and private organisations across the industry. Learners will need to develop a good understanding of the benefits of participating in work experience and how it can help them achieve their career objectives. You could ask guest speakers from different travel and tourism businesses to talk about available work placements, either in person or via Skype or Facetime, before asking learners to research a minimum of three realistic opportunities for their work experience with an aim of securing one appropriate opportunity. Alternatively, online resources or visits to organisations could also be utilised.

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Learners should feel well prepared to make the most of their work experience opportunity. They should thoroughly research their placement organisation in order to identify specific aims and objectives to achieve over 40 hours of work experience. Learners may need to attend an interview or go through an application process. Alternatively, learners may only need to attend a meeting with their placement supervisor to obtain all the essential information they need before embarking on their placement opportunity. You could encourage learners to take part in mock meetings or interviews to prepare them for success. You will need to be aware of the necessary legal permissions and checks required for some placement opportunities or where full-risk assessments are needed.

Learning aim B

For learning aim B, learners need to participate in a minimum of 40 hours' work experience in one appropriate travel and tourism organisation. They will need to be prepared to record the tasks carried out, the hours attended and any relevant health and safety issues. You should confirm that the learner has researched the placement thoroughly and has all the key information before starting the work. Placement supervisors should ensure that all learners receive a suitable induction at the start of their placement, covering necessary health and safety information, accident reporting and the limits of their own responsibility. Learners may then shadow colleagues or undertake their own appropriate tasks and activities, following instructions as appropriate. Learners must work safely at all times, following company procedures and meeting all health and safety guidelines. You should visit all learners while on placement, to ensure they have had an appropriate induction, are working safely and are developing new skills and competencies. You will need to complete a record of activity to outline how learners are demonstrating work-related skills proficiently.

Learning aim C

For learning aim C, learners need to review their work experience, and the knowledge and skills developed, using feedback from different stakeholders. This could include feedback from colleagues, workplace supervisors, mentors and you as their tutor. They will need to assess and evaluate their own performance, drawing reasoned conclusions on how their experience can support future career choices. They should make recommendations for both their personal and professional development, setting appropriate short- and long-term career objectives as appropriate. The use of skills audits and other tools may help learners reflect on their progress throughout the experience and what skills they have specifically developed.

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Assessment model

Learning aim	Key content areas	Recommended assessment approach
A Investigate opportunities for work-related learning in the travel and tourism industry	**A1** Work-related learning **A2** Outcomes and benefits of work experience **A3** Planning for work experience	A resource portfolio, including details of research into potential work experience opportunities and an evaluation of the benefits of preparing for and carrying out work experience.
B Carry out work experience in an appropriate and safe manner	**B1** Induction **B2** Role and tasks **B3** Working safely	Observation of learners on work experience carrying out tasks and activities and interacting with service users and staff, evidenced by observation report signed by assessor. A diary/journal/log/online blog and portfolio will cover tasks carried out, the amount of time spent on work experience and refer to any relevant health and safety matters.
C Reflect on work experience undertaken and its influence on own personal and professional development	**C1** Learning from work experience **C2** Using feedback and setting goals	Reflection and production of a personal/professional development portfolio (PDP), evaluating significance of own work experience in supporting career development.

Assessment guidance

This unit is internally assessed through three assignments. All learners must independently generate individual evidence that can be authenticated.

The first assignment covers learning aim A and consists of a portfolio that includes a comparison of different work experience options. Learners must consider at least three realistic opportunities within the travel and tourism industry and how each could support their preparation for the workplace. They will need to provide evidence of appropriate work experience planning. Learners must show how the experience can benefit their understanding of the travel and tourism industry and appropriate future career opportunities.

The second assignment covers learning aim B. Learners will need to provide evidence of undertaking a minimum of 40 hours' work experience in a travel and tourism organisation. You should visit learners on placement and complete a detailed record of activity that demonstrates the learner's work-related skills proficiency, including how they demonstrated initiative and confidence to carry out activities safely and in line with organisational procedures. The signed and dated record of activity should make clear judgements on the individual learner's ability to meet specific objectives in different situations, how well they communicated professionally using appropriate methods for their audience.

Learners will also need to complete a diary/journal/log/online blog and portfolio that covers all the tasks they have carried out to meet objectives set prior to placement commencement,

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the number of hours of work experience they have completed and any relevant health and safety matters.

The third assignment covers learning aim C. Learners must produce an in-depth personal and professional development portfolio (PDP) that evaluates the significance of their own work experience in supporting their career goals and development. Learners should demonstrate evidence that they have used feedback from different stakeholders to reflect on and review their own strengths and areas for development, making recommendations.

Getting started

This gives you a starting place for one way of delivering the unit, based around the recommended assessment approach in the specification.

Unit 13: Work Experience in Travel and Tourism

Introduction

It would be useful to explore learners' previous work-related experience in the travel and tourism sector, where relevant. Learners could discuss previous placements they have undertaken, or part-time employment, and how these experiences have helped to develop their skills and influence their future career aspirations and goals.

Learning aim A: Investigate opportunities for work-related learning in the travel and tourism industry

- Learners could list as many different work-related learning opportunities within the travel and tourism industry they can think of. They could draw on local examples, e.g. hotels, visitor attractions, retail travel outlets and conference venues. You can extend this activity by asking learners to categorise different examples into private, public and voluntary organisations and saying whether the roles identified are likely to be full time, part time, seasonal or voluntary.
- Learners should consider what their own career and progression aspirations are. They could speak to a career adviser and/or complete an online career profile/ assessment to help them shape their future career goals. A number of online tools are available to explore learners' broad preferences and personalities, such as the personality tests.
- Learners could then explore the advantages and disadvantages of different opportunities and how these might link with their own career and progression aspirations. (For example, a learner with a passionate enthusiasm for sales and entrepreneurship may not find a part-time placement in a small museum the most rewarding for developing the relevant skills for their future career.)
- Ask learners to work in pairs to take a specific work experience opportunity from those already identified and investigate the specific knowledge, skills and understanding that it offers, e.g. sector-specific skills, technical knowledge, practical experience, customer interaction experience. Learners could share their findings to help the class narrow down possible placement opportunities that might be the most useful to them.
- A guest speaker visit from a human resource professional or work-placement coordinator may be useful in helping learners to prepare well for their work experience. Learners could complete a personal analysis of their own strengths and weaknesses, and the influence of opportunities and threats, or undertake a skills audit to identify their current skill strengths and gaps and what they would like to achieve from their placement.
- Learners should now have a clearer focus for possible work experience placement options, matching their existing skills to their future career and progression opportunities. Discussions with careers specialists and professionals may be useful in helping learners to decide on their preferred placement option. They could be encouraged to make a list of advantages and disadvantages, or complete a decision matrix (for more information, search online for 'mindtools.com decision making analysis') for three or four possible options to inform their final choices.
- When learners have identified their preferred work placement options, they should discuss as a class and identify what key information will be crucial for a placement interview or meeting. They should then browse the company website and speak with other learners who may know

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the organisation or have previously undertaken a placement, to find out this key information in relation to their own upcoming placement.

- Learners should consider work experience from the employer's perspective to gain a secure understanding of what a work experience supervisor would expect from a potential learner. What would they want them to know? They could work in groups of three to take park in mock interviews, or role play a work experience initial meeting, to help them ask and answer suitable questions. One learner would take the role of applicant, the other the work experience supervisor and the third would act as the observer.
- It would be useful for learners to devise a work experience logbook to record the key information required both before the initial meeting and during a meeting with the placement supervisor. This could be a template or table to make notes of key information and the employer's expectations. Learners should also consider the format for their work experience journal or diary while on placement. This could be an online blog, e.g. Tumblr, Blogger or WordPress or a more traditional diary or paper-based record.
- It may be necessary for you to carry out a risk assessment of the work experience venues prior to learners commencing their experience. This should be in line with your organisational policy and procedure. Work experience supervisors should be clear about what duties and activities learners can reasonably be expected to undertake. These should be useful and challenging, allowing learners to develop new understanding and skills, but recognise the limits of their responsibility as learners on a work experience placement.
- Ask learners to consider the need for health and safety in the workplace. Introduce the topic of hazard and risks by showing short videos on workplace safety. A number of different examples are available on YouTube for example. Ask learners to work in pairs to compile a checklist of hazards that they may encounter in specific travel and tourism workplaces, e.g. hotels, visitor attractions, train stations and travel agents. Ask learners how they would minimise risks to acceptable levels, e.g. through training. Learners could complete a draft risk assessment. A number of free resources and templates are available online.

Learning aim B: Carry out work experience in an appropriate and safe manner

- Learners will need to undertake a suitable induction at the work placement provider to ensure they have a sound understanding of the health, safety and security responsibilities and procedures, along with absence procedures and their expected roles. Learners should record key information in a suitable format, as part of their work experience record or logbook.
- It may be useful for learners to observe their colleagues at work before gradually taking on independent duties appropriate for their role and responsibilities. For example, a learner on work experience at a local hotel might spend some time observing colleagues in different departments before starting to interact with customers and complete specific duties themselves.
- Ideally, learners will undertake a good range of different activities and tasks to meet specific objectives. This could include interacting with both internal and external customers in a variety of different contexts and ways. They should follow given instructions and organisational policy and procedure. They should be able to complete tasks that require initiative by the end of their placements. Learners should be well presented, using any personal protective equipment as necessary. They will need to work safely at all times.
- You should visit learners while on placement and observe them completing tasks and activities, communicating with colleagues and customers as appropriate and following instructions and procedures safely. Speak with relevant staff and the learner's work experience supervisor to

discuss their progress and check the logbook, blog or diary for an ongoing record of attendance and activity.

- If you are not carrying out the visits yourself, it will be useful to give supervisors/mentors a template to record feedback on learners' progress, specifically recording the key skills developed, problems overcome, how well they communicated with others and demonstrated initiative, as appropriate.

Learning aim C: Reflect on work experience undertaken and its influence on own personal and professional development

- You could start by leading a group discussion on the different roles, responsibilities, tasks and activities that each learner completed while on their work experience placement and how these developed learners' knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Learners should individually reflect on the knowledge and skills gained through their work experience, both specific and more general, transferable skills. They could complete a further skills audit/analysis of their strengths and weaknesses, as well as potential opportunities and threats, and compare it with the one they completed before work experience, to identify any 'skills shift'. Learners may wish to create a brief visual presentation summary of their reflections to share.
- Learners should use their record of activity, logbook and feedback from supervisors, mentors and peers to reflect on their skills and areas that still require development to help them achieve their career goals and aspirations. They should plan how they might address any skills gaps by making personal and professional development goals to meet specific objectives, both in the short and long term.
- Finally, learners should use their records and reflections to evaluate how the whole work experience process has helped them to support their career plans and aspirations. Did they learn valuable new skills? Did the experience change their plans and goals? What final conclusions can they draw from their experiences?

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Details of links to other BTEC units and qualifications, and to other relevant units/qualifications

This unit links to:

- Unit 5: Travel and Tourism Enterprises

Resources

In addition to the resources listed below, publishers are likely to produce Pearson-endorsed textbooks that support this unit of the Pearson BTEC International Level 3 Qualification in Travel and Tourism. Check the Pearson website (http://qualifications.pearson.com/endorsed-resources) for more information as titles achieve endorsement.

Textbooks

Three general guides on preparing for work experience placements, including planning, dealing with challenges and unexpected events and planning for future careers:

Douglas, A and O'Neill, S – *The Essential Work Experience Handbook*, 3rd Edition (Gill & Macmillan, 2010) ISBN 9780717147595

Fanthorne, C – *Work Placements: A Survival Guide for Students* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2004) ISBN 9781403934345

Midwinter, D and Whatmore, T – *Positive Placements: Making the Most of Your Educational Placement* (Continuum, 2011) ISBN 9781441195425

Websites

Barclays LifeSkills – resource from Barclays Bank that includes a variety of resources and information for tutors and learners on preparing for work experience

Careers That Move – provides a range of information and guidance on the variety of opportunities within passenger transport and travel

Mind Tools – a useful skills resource

Prospects – contains a range of career advice, including advice on finding placement opportunities

The Big Choice – a learner and graduate jobsite that includes advice on the benefits of work placements

Pearson is not responsible for the content of any external internet sites. It is essential for tutors to preview each website before using it in class so as to ensure that the URL is still accurate, relevant and appropriate. We suggest that tutors bookmark useful websites and consider enabling learners to access them through the school/college intranet.